

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed April 19, 2005 in connection with the above-identified application, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. Claims 11-36 and 38-62 are pending in this application, of which claims 11, 12, 16, 20, 23, 24, 27, 34, 35, 39, 61 and 62 are independent claims. No claims have been amended in this response. The application as now presented is believed to be in allowable condition.

A. Information Disclosure Statements

In item 1 on page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner notes that an information disclosure statement (IDS) was received and placed in the application file, but not considered because it allegedly failed to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(1). The Examiner fails to mention, however, the particular IDS that he is referring to. Just prior to the April 19, 2005 Office Action, the Applicants filed on March 2, 2005 an IDS and Form-1449 listing a single U.S. patent to Wrobel (U.S. Patent No. 5,303,124). It is not readily apparent to the Applicants how this IDS, or any other IDS filed to date in the present application, may have failed to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(1), as alleged by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request clarification on this issue.

Additionally, Applicants respectfully point out that it appears that some IDSs filed by the Applicants have not yet been considered by the Examiner. According to Applicants' records, IDSs filed on the following dates have been received by the PTO (as indicated on PAIR and as evidenced by return post cards stamped by the PTO) but not yet reviewed and initialed by the Examiner:

- January 9, 2004 (first listed reference to Campagna, US 4,394,716)
- June 24, 2004 (first listed reference to Lowery, US 6,504,301)
- August 26, 2004 (first listed reference to DeGarmo, US 3,192,379)

- January 7, 2005 (first listed reference to DeMott, US 2,943,185)
- January 25, 2005 (first listed reference to Kingstone, US 5,333,228)
- February 14, 2005 (first listed reference to Borgert, US 5,519,496)
- March 4, 2005 (first listed reference to Wrobel, US 5,303,124)
- June 30, 2005 (first listed reference to Matthias, US 5,165,778)

Furthermore, Applicants file herewith an additional IDS citing three U.S. patents (first listed reference to Hisano, US 4,703,344).

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to review each of the IDSs indicated above, together with the references cited on the Form PTO-1449 attached to each of these IDSs, and return initialed copies of the Forms PTO-1449 to the Applicant, thereby indicating review by the Examiner of the cited references. If the Examiner requires additional copies of these IDSs, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representatives at the telephone number indicated below to request these copies.

B. Claim Rejections

In item 3 on page 3 of the Office Action, claims 11-36 and 38-62 were rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as allegedly being obvious over claims 1-79 of U.S. Patent No. 6,744,584. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and disagree with the Examiner's assertion that the claims of the present application are not patentably distinct from those of U.S. Patent No. 6,744,584. However, solely for the purposes of expediting prosecution of the present application towards allowance, Applicants file herewith a Terminal Disclaimer to overcome the rejections herein.

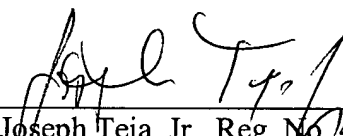
C. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicants' representative at the telephone number indicated below to discuss any outstanding issues relating to the allowability of the application.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicants hereby request any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 06-1448, Reference CKB-089.01.

Respectfully submitted,

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